

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Monday, December 12, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
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# Margai, Others For High Court



**Fred Carew**

A Freetown based private legal practitioner has opined that the matter between the State, Charles Margai and eleven others may be committed to High Court. The Lawyer who prefers anonymity said the eleven court charge of conspiracy proffered against the leader



**Charles Margai**

of the unregistered People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) was in his words "serious" which the lower court is incapable of handling.

"There is a possibility that after the next sitting the matter will be committed to High Court after preliminary investigations

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## Margai, Others For High Court

at the Magistrate Court," he said. Once the matter is committed to the High Court, it is expected that the trial would be done by a judge or a panel of judges. The Freetown based legal practitioner however expressed the hope that Margai and eleven others would have a fair trial.

"This is a very sensitive matter which will attract lots of attention". He said that because of public interest there is high hope that the law will not be twisted to favour either side.

It will be recalled that on November 18 this year supporters of Margai's PMDC clashed with the police in Bo during the Thanksgiving Ceremony of

the Christ The King College School. The clash coincided with the visit of the Vice President Solomon Berewa to the School Campus. He is himself an old boy of the school.

Following the clash, Mr. Margai and few of his supporters were briefly arrested by the police who obtained statements from them. They were afterwards released on self-bail the same day pending investigations.

On Wednesday last week Mr. Margai was picked up at his Rawdon Street Office and driven to Bo where he and ten others were slammed eleven count charge of conspiracy and riotous conduct.

Salone Times

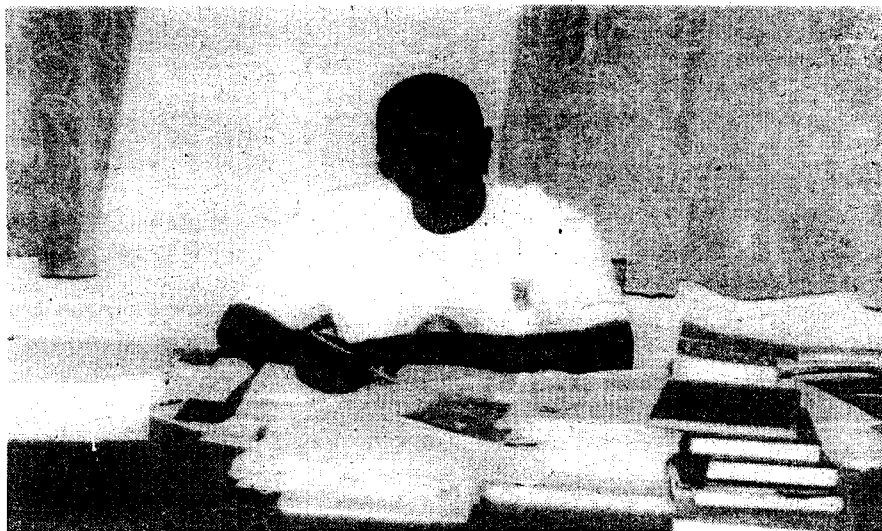
Monday, December 12, 2005

# 'UNAMSIL MONITORING CHARLES MARGAI CASE'

*By Phebean Williams*

*The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is monitoring the case against the yet-to-be registered PMDC party leader, Charles Francis Margai.*

Speaking to SALONE TIMES over the telephone yesterday, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, Daudi Mwakawago disclosed that UNAMSIL is aware of the incident that occurred in Bo recently between the Vice President, Solomon Berewa and PMDC supporters. It could be recalled that Mr. Berewa and Mr. Margai were in Bo to grace the annual celebration of their alma mater CKC during which the Vice President's motorcade was allegedly interrupted by PMDC supporters.



**PMDC interim youth leader, Malam Janneh**

Mr. Margai who was arrested at his chambers on Tuesday is facing an 11-count charge including Behaving in a Disorderly Manner and Conspiracy. Amidst this situation, the Special Representative maintains that the incident in Bo does not warrant UNAMSIL to extend

its mandate to 2008 as some Sierra Leoneans have suggested.

The extension of UNAMSIL's mandate in any country, he said, is a procedure that is determined by the Security Council of the United Nations. He however, went on to

say that Mr. Margai's trial is being strictly monitored by UNAMSIL.

Following Mr. Margai's arrest on Tuesday, PMDC supporters were seen with placards calling on UNAMSIL and other international bodies to intervene before the situation gets out of hand.



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**Irish withdrawal from Liberia to go ahead****December 09, 2005 22:40**

The Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Jim Sreenan, who has been visiting Irish peacekeepers in Liberia, has said the country remains on a knife edge following the recent elections there.

Despite a new role for the Defence Forces in neighbouring Sierra Leone, it is still anticipated that the troops will withdraw from west Africa next December as planned.

For the past two years, 430 Irish peacekeepers have been helping to steer Liberia away from civil war.

Ms Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected as president in Liberia following elections last month. There are now huge expectations for rapid development in the country after the 14-year civil war.

Despite a planned withdrawal in December, Irish peacekeepers are due to take on additional duties in a few weeks' time.


Troops will be sent into neighbouring Sierra Leone, which is also recovering from civil war, to provide back-up security in the event of trouble at the Special Court.

The situation in Sierra Leone could become tense and more volatile when verdicts are handed down in January.

Tensions in the area could also be tightened if Nigeria extradites former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, as planned.

This page : <http://www.rte.ie/news/2005/1209/lberia>



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## **Annan calls for urgent aid to Liberia's security agenda; sanctions are not lifted**

9 December 2005 – With United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan calling on the international community to give Liberia urgent assistance with security sector reform, an expert panel has spotlighted “continuing reports of organized recruitment of ex-combatants in Liberia to fight in Côte d’Ivoire.”

Both reports – one from Mr. Annan and the other from the five-member Panel of Experts on Liberia – have been submitted to the UN Security Council.

In his ninth report on the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Mr. Annan urges Liberia's international partners, which have been helping to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended 14 years of civil strife, to complete that agenda and tackle daunting challenges in the wake of the elections which took place in September and November.

“In this regard, I am particularly concerned about the uncompleted tasks of security-sector reform and the reintegration of numerous ex-combatants. I, therefore, strongly appeal to Member States that are in a position to do so to extend urgent assistance to these vital programmes,” he says.

In the calm but fragile atmosphere, the main sources of potentially serious security challenges have included former Armed Forces of Liberia personnel who were dissatisfied with their demobilization and retirement benefits, ex-combatants awaiting community reintegration opportunities, disgruntled supporters of the candidate who failed to win the November run-off elections and members of ex-President Charles Taylor's former armed militia called the Anti-Terrorist Unit, Mr. Annan notes.

“Security problems in western Côte d’Ivoire also remained a potential threat to the efforts to consolidate stability in Liberia,” he says.

In his report next March he will recommend adjustments to UNMIL's deployment, including specific benchmarks, he says. These benchmarks will take into account the findings of a multidisciplinary assessment mission which will visit Liberia next month and the outcome of consultations with the newly elected Government, Liberia's international partners and other stakeholders.

They will also include the new responsibilities assigned to UNMIL, including guarding the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the detention of Mr. Taylor, if he returns to Liberia, and possible cross-border support for the UN Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI), Mr. Annan says.

On the question of recruiting mercenaries, the Panel of Experts says although there are only three points where vehicles can go between Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia, the length of the border, at 716 kilometres, makes monitoring difficult.

The requirements for lifting the embargo on Liberian rough diamonds and timber have not been met, while sales of iron ore have not been accounted for and scrap metal is being sold at a fraction of its international price, it said.

A 25-year agreement with Mittal Steel, reached in a procedure that was not transparent, contained

provisions that could be costly to Liberians. “These provisions suggest that Liberians cannot rely on their Government and the international community to protect their interests, but that transparent negotiations are necessary.”

On financial governance, “the financial administration of the National Transitional Government of Liberia continues to be weak with an archaic internal control system and a virtually non-existent external oversight system. No effort has been made to prepare or audit the accounts of the Republic of Liberia.” it says.

The budget for 2005/06 reduces significantly the allocations to important social sectors such as health, education, public works, rural development and agriculture, while in 2004/05 “large amounts of funds” were transferred from such Ministries as Health, Education and Public Works to the Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Budget Bureau, the General Service Agency and others.